

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

**This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:**

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

1. (currently amended): An image judging apparatus, comprising:

a candidate region extracting means for extracting candidate regions for predetermined patterns from medical image data;

an inner/outer outline image extracting means for extracting inner/outer outline images corresponding to an inner/outer outline region, which are in the vicinity of the outline of the candidate regions extracted by the candidate region extracting means; and

a pattern judging means for judging the type of pattern within the candidate regions, by employing characteristic amounts of the inner/outer outline image extracted by the inner/outer outline image extracting means;

a density pattern extracting means, for extracting density patterns, which are present within unit pixel groups that constitute the inner/outer outline images, extracted by the inner/outer outline image extracting means;

a presence frequency calculating means, for judging which of the density patterns the unit pixel groups of the inner/outer outline images are similar to, and calculating presence frequencies by counting the presence of the similar density patterns within the inner/outer outline image; and

a classifying means, for classifying the inner/outer outline images according to the type of pattern, based on the presence frequencies of the density patterns; wherein

the pattern judging means judges to which classification the candidate region belongs, from among the classifications of the inner/outer outline images, which were classified according